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## The Patrimony Corrupted: Artwork concerning the reconsideration of the role of men

Wright State University Art Galleries

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# **The Patrimony Corrupted**

**Artwork concerning the reconsideration of the role of men**

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**Wright State University Art Galleries  
January 5 through 31, 1999**

This men's exhibition is the direct result of the influence of some very strong women. Thanks to the team behind the 1994 Dayton Visual Arts Center exhibition *The Female Nature*, especially Virginia Burroughs, who generated the spark for this show, and Marilyn Shannon, who helped to keep it burning.

Thanks also to Dr. Carol Nathanson for supporting this modest follow-up to her 1995 exhibit *Women's Rites of Passage* and to Dr. Linda Caron for her editorial prowess.

A special thank you goes to Patricia Kelly of the Wright State University Artist Series for providing the assistance and the encouragement for the production of this catalogue.

Thanks Dad.

# **The Patrimony Corrupted**

**Artwork concerning the reconsideration of the role of men**

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**Scott Anderson  
Joseph Dal Pra  
Jed Jackson**

**John Jacobsmeyer  
James Johnson  
Eric Stein**

**Wright State University Art Galleries  
January 5 through 31, 1999**



# The Patrimony Corrupted

**patrimony** *n.* 1.a. An inheritance from a father or other ancestor. b. An inheritance or a legacy; heritage  
**corrupted** *v.* 4. To cause to become rotten; spoil. 5. To change the original form of (a text, for example).

The patrimony has been corrupted. That assumed legacy, which provided men with marble corridors and statues to themselves, privileged seats of power and even the best seats at the dinner table, has been ruined.

Growing up in the 1970's a young man was still shown the path to the legacy by his father, grandfather and peers while being lectured in the inappropriateness of its presumptions by his mother, sisters and female friends. A lot of what the young man heard made sense to him -- from both sides. But it would be up to him to find his own path in this new world of gender-consciousness.

Women did not corrupt the patrimony. Its own ignorance and the absolute certainty of its convictions had held it together for eons. No, the patrimony changed because men allowed themselves to become aware of what they were doing. Surely there was a certain amount of arm-twisting and other bargaining that led to this benevolent gesture on the part of the male culture. But men found that they *needed* women to be more than what they had been allowed to be. And without lowering themselves to produce an apology or to admit that they had been wrong, men slowly began to allow women to share in the legacy.

"Sensitive" men (a term which seems to represent enlightenment and weakness at the same time) admit that we had been wrong. "Male Chauvinistic Pigs" (a charming catch phrase which singlehandedly galvanized the entire female populace during the Women's Movement) hold that we were right all along.

Women want us to reflect the strength and utilitarianism which is our very nature, while striving to allow ourselves to actually *care*.

Sometimes it's too much for us. We steal away to drink our beer and rattle our lungs and revel in the pleasures of our own inappropriateness. We know that tomorrow will bring compromise and capitulation again. We will be sorry and we will know why. But we all have our own voices and vices.

An exhibition such as this one would only work if male artists could be found who would take it seriously and not treat it as an opportunity to "one-up" women artists or exact a sardonic payback for all of the attention being paid to the rising voices of women. It necessitated finding men who were honestly addressing or able to address gender in their work.

The modern history of art has provided male artists with ample subjects which did not require social commentary. We had little need of it as men, particularly if one were a white man. This show received a surprising number and variety of responses when advertised; men in ivory towers and farmhouses and even prison walls were heard from. I am thankful for them all. A selection of those responses is represented in this exhibition.

As a group, these artists are speaking of men; men and women, men and society, men and the ills of power, men and the past, men and the environment. Interestingly, two of the artists in the current exhibition are the partners of women artists who showed in the exhibition *Women's Rites of Passage*, presented here in 1995.

We all have our own voices and vices. So I won't try to speak for the assembled men. They are speaking, in this catalogue and in this exhibition, for us.

Craig Martin, University Galleries Coordinator and  
curator of *The Patrimony Corrupted*

# Scott Anderson

Hartford City, Indiana

MFA West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia  
BFA Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

Contract Professor of Art, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

My paintings revolve around an autobiographical and philosophical theme with different aberrations. I describe the theme of the paintings with the work **Dyscrasia**. Dyscrasia means an abnormality of the body, bad mixtures, and poison blood. The word Dyscrasia represents my interest in social and natural systems that have gone awry, that have been abused or have been intentionally or unintentionally misinterpreted.

In a series of paintings called *Opposing Forms*, my intent is to have a series of confrontations between formal elements, the visual elements and certain philosophical problems. The *Male Folly* series pokes fun at male conundrums of supremacy and specific notions such as violence and tragic male heroes.

In *The Lemon King* an engraved Patriarch sacrifices himself to a symbol of his own corrupted ego. The meat lemon represents an idea not only sour but palpably vile and absurd.





Scott Anderson, *The Lemon King*, 1997, acrylic/watercolor on paper, 45 x 60 in.



# Joseph Dal Pra

Hartford, Connecticut

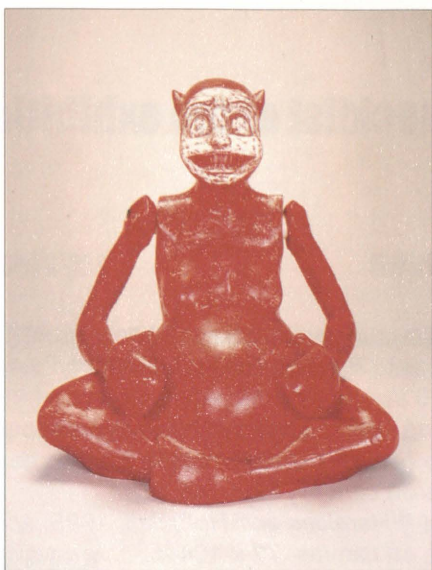
MFA University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio

BFA College of Mount Saint Joseph, Cincinnati, Ohio

Adjunct Instructor, Hartford Art School, University of Hartford,  
West Hartford, Connecticut

The works have been object based installations about conflicts between genders and developing identity. My process has developed from intuitively making objects and then reflecting upon and investigating their meaning. The objects have developed into characters, such as hero boys, jesters, jolly men, authority figures, and props such as hammers, knives and canes which give the characters power and identity. These are developed into installations which are arrangements of objects, each object relating to and interacting with the rest.

The images are a commentary on the development of male identity. Some female objects have a defiant or indifferent character towards the male objects and some seem to contain their own power in opposition to male characters. The male images have a combination of comic and violent characteristics in their toy like quality. Toys as objects that develop our sense of identity in relation to gender roles are part of my explorations into the makeup of male identity, especially in relation to conflict with female identity.



**Joseph Dal Pra**, *Cat Woman*, 1998, burlap, glue and talc, painted, 36 in. tall and *Hero Boy*, 1998, bronze, 4.5 in tall, from the installation *Cat Woman-Hero Boy Dance*

## Checklist of the exhibition

### Scott Anderson

*Flout*, 1998, charcoal and acrylic on paper, 54 x 61 in.

*The Turd King and The Two Fates*, 1998, acrylic on paper,  
45 x 60 in.

*The Lemon King*, 1997, acrylic/watercolor on paper, 45 x 60 in.

*Male Folly (the Prelude) Conglomerating*, 1995, acrylic on  
fabrics on canvas, 52 x 144 in.

*Male Folly (Act I) Herakles and Hercules*, 1995, acrylic on  
fabrics on canvas, 72 x 104 in.

### Joseph Dal Pra

*Boy's Life*, 1998, installation of mixed media objects

*Cat Woman-Hero Boy Dance*, 1998, installation; *Cat Woman*  
figure, burlap, glue and talc, painted, 36 in. tall, *Hero*  
*Boy* figures, bronze, 4.5 in tall

### Jed Jackson

*100 years in Paris*, 1997-8, oil on wood, 48 x 58 in.

*La Civilisation du Cul*, 1997, oil on wood, 28 x 34 in.

*Fragments of Hellas*, 1997, oil on wood, 28 x 34 in.

*All Souls Are Worth Buying*, 1994, oil on wood, 28 x 34 in.

*New World Order*, 1991, oil on wood, 28 x 34 in.



## **John Jacobsmeyer**

*Pathogenic Polyphagia*, 1996, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in.

*Paranoid Prostatia*, 1996, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in.

*Prodigal Son*, 1994, oil on canvas, 48 x 60 in.

*Marsyas*, 1994, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 in.

*Digging*, 1994, oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in.

## **James W. Johnson**

*Slugger*, 1998, oil on canvas, 42 x 62 in.

*Cropped*, 1997, oil on canvas, 45 x 67 in.

*Over a Hill*, 1996, oil on canvas, 43 x 63 in.

*Backyard BarBQ*, 1996, oil on canvas, 65 x 39 in.

*Woman Who Blesses*, 1995, oil and mixed media on canvas,  
45 x 35 in.

## **Eric Stein**

*Souvenir #10, Pump Regulator*, 1998, polychrome wood and  
plastic, 88 x 12 x 39 in.

*Souvenir #12, Double Injection*, 1998, polychrome wood and  
plastic, 49 x 9 x 37 in.

*Souvenir #13, Power Lift*, 1998, polychrome wood and plastic,  
77 x 15 x 47 in.

*Souvenir #14, Master Molding*, 1998, polychrome wood and  
plastic, 80 x 5 x 39 in.





Jed Jackson, *La Civilisation du Cul*, 1997, oil on wood, 28 x34 in.

# Jed Jackson

Murphysboro, Illinois

MFA Cornell University, New York, New York  
BFA Memphis College of Art, Memphis, Tennessee  
Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan,  
Maine

Associate Professor of Painting and Core Curriculum, School of  
Art and Design, Southern Illinois University at  
Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois

In the public reception of ideas stemming from the women's movement, men are often stereotyped as oppressors, manipulators and objectifiers of female bodies in a way that is in fact dehumanizing to many men. Paradoxically, the objectification of the male body is a central part of the current Hollywood cinema, as well as in professional sports. The institutionalization of male to male brutality, in popular culture and sports, makes it perhaps even more ubiquitous than the male to female variety. These stereotypes often translate into low expectations for gender relations.

In my work I often try to draw humor and irony to the discussion. My paintings are often parodies of gender relations by using symbolic elements and sometimes quotes from authors. *La Civilisation du Cul* compares the feminized and masculinized high culture of Europe and America.



John Jacobsmeyer, *Prodigal Son*, 1997, oil on canvas, size?



# **John Jacobsmeyer**

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

MFA Yale University School of Art, New Haven, Connecticut

BFA University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire

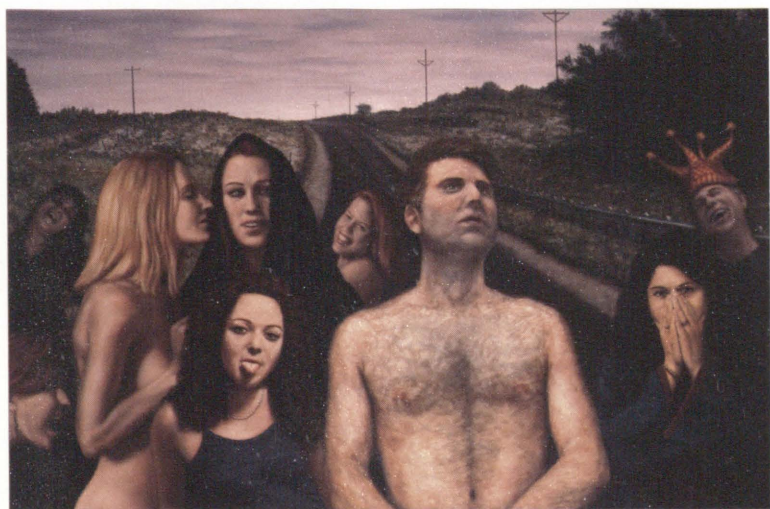
Assistant Professor of Drawing, Painting and Printmaking,  
University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire

The central figure in my paintings represents a lowly or vulgar man who is numbly aware of his metaphysical world. To expound on the male's futile attempt to escape his carnal nature, I reconstructed the heroic male as disempowered ego, as anti-hero.

The new male under siege tries to simultaneously preserve the traditional male and conform to his new status as anti-hero. Self-parody in these capricious narratives results from reconciling these two sides of identity.

The anti-hero in my work is party to the crime while conjuring his penance. Suffering disease, he envisions paradise. And lustfully body conscious, he is spiritually awakened. His imaginings emerge out of a new concurrence of hubris and guilt. The paintings reveal identities caught in limbo, waiting for reason to supplant an unyielding confusion.





James W. Johnson, *Over a Hill*, 1996, oil on canvas, 43 x 63 in.

# James W. Johnson

Lubbock, Texas

MFA Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

BA State University of New York at Oswego, Oswego, New York

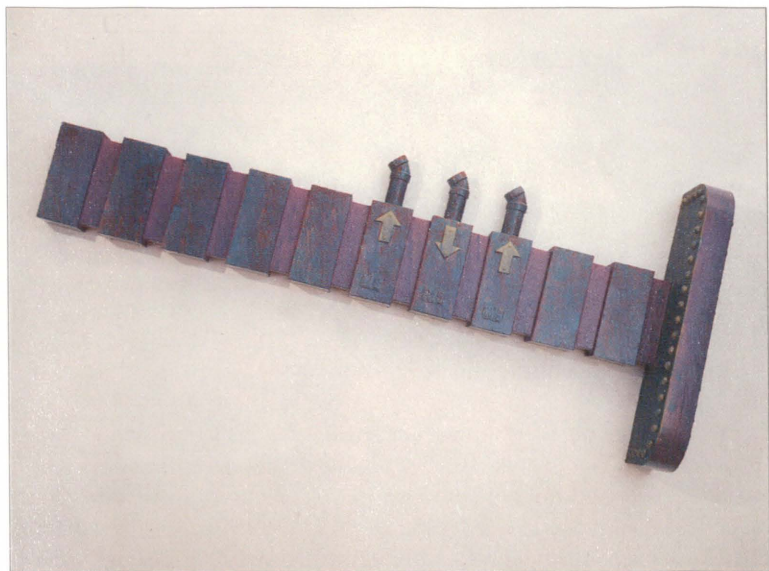
Studio artist, multimedia computer art and website designer

"Johnson strips his subjects down in a manner that is much more than simply depicting them unclothed. They represent, in fact, the difference between being nude and being naked, both physically and psychologically.

By the models' confrontational gestures and positioning, Johnson has also placed us, the viewing public, in a voyeuristic position. We find ourselves viewing Johnson's paintings in the guise of self-conscious "peeping toms," looking at and questioning his painted world of psycho-sexual analysis.

It is Johnson's directness and his refusal to "pussyfoot-around" that catch so many people off guard. He is a consummate craftsman whose clarity of concept and fidelity of execution are so ruthlessly direct that he leaves us no recourse but to choose sides or even argue with ourselves about how to respond. Feminists in particular have a hard time with Johnson's work. ... However, it is an overreaction on the viewer's part to dismiss Johnson as a male chauvinist, since he is just as hard on himself and his male subjects."

Jim Edwards, "The Art of James W. Johnson," *Museum and Arts Magazine*, May 1993



**Eric Stein, *Souvenir #10: Pump Regulator*, 1998, polychrome wood and plastic, 88 x 12 x 39 in.**



# Eric Stein

Huguenot, New York

MFA Ohio University, Athens, Ohio

BA State University College at Fredonia, Fredonia, New York

Studio artist and fine arts shipper

As I continued to work on these pieces and the theme of the show, I found myself holding back on references to female genitalia but continued to reference and redefine male themes. The roles and expectations, along with the sensitivities of women, have been exhaustively explored while the newer roles of men have been confusing. Considering both sides, women generally like men to be strong and powerful as well as sensitive. Men that are secure are never threatened by powerful, aggressive women, but many men are confused about what is expected of them today.

In my sculpture, the general composite of bolts, rivets, and heavy steel leaves little room for feathers and strings, common elements in the artworks by women about women. Constructions of pumps and injectors further secures the reference to strength and power. In *Master Molding* the theme is expanded, showing man as dominant in initiative but, even by design, producing male & female children and remaining primary to providing a home. This piece is not a reference to a matriarchal system but it does remind and restrain man as being responsible for the home. Women involved with this responsibility should also find this piece encouraging; a reminder to those men that do not take family and the home seriously.





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